

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 ACDA-12 HA-05

MCT-01 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 /101 W

-----101949 141444Z /41

O R 141340Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8666

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS

DIA WASHDC PRIORITY

USIA WASHDC PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE

AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY KIGALI

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI

AMCONSUL BUKAVU

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 2441

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINR, CG

SUBJECT: ZAIRIAN COUP PLOT TRIAL: INDICTMENTS READ

REF: KINSHASA 2351

1. SUMMARY: GOZ HAS REQUESTED DEATH SENTENCES FOR 28

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DEFENDANTS IN COUP PLOT TRIAL. PROSECUTION REITERATED WITH
CONSIDERABLE EMPHASIS CHARGES THAT BELGIAN AND LIBYAN DIPLOMATS
WERE INVOLVED IN CONSPIRACY AND AGAIN REFERRED IN PASSING TO

ALLEGED PRESENCE OF US DIPLOMAT AT A MEETING OF PLOTTERS IN BELGIUM.
GOZ ANNOUNCED THAT MILITARY TRIBUNAL WILL HAND DOWN SENTENCES
MARCH 17. END SUMMARY

2. FOLLOWING MARCH 11-12 WEEKEND COURT SESSIONS DURING WHICH THE REMAINING 21 DEFENDANTS GAVE TESTIMONY WHICH SUGGESTED THEIR LACK OF INVOLVEMENT IN THE ALLEGED CONSPIRACY, THE PROSECUTOR READ INDICTMENTS ON SIXTH DAY OF COUP PLOT TRIAL MARCH 13. GOZ REQUESTED 28 DEATH SENTENCES (5 IN ABSENTIA), SOUGHT PRISON SENTENCES RANGING FROM 5 TO 20 YEARS FOR 45 PERSONS, AND RECOMMENDED THAT 11 DEFENDANTS BE RELEASED FOR INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE BUT BE BARRED FROM GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT.

3. ALLEGED INVOLVEMENT OF BELGIAN, LIBYAN AND AMERICAN DIPLOMATS WERE REITERATED BY PROSECUTION. ONLY PASSING REFERENCE WAS MADE TO US DIPLOMAT SAID TO HAVE MET WITH CONSPIRATORS IN LIEGE. DESCRIBING KALUME'S CONTACTS IN EUROPE, PROSECUTOR RESTATED, WITHOUT ANY PARTICULAR EMPHASIS, THAT AN AMERICAN DIPLOMAT WAS PRESENT AT A MEETING WITH CONSPIRATORS IN HOME OF BELGIAN COUPLE IN LIEGE. PROSECUTOR SAID KALUME WAS REASSURED BY MONGUYA CONCERNING AMERICAN AT MEETING WITH STATEMENT TO EFFECT THAT US DIPLOMAT'S PRESENCE WAS ALL RIGHT SINCE HE WAS FRIENDLY TO MARC GROUP. AFTER THIS PASSING REFERENCE TO AMERICAN, PROSECUTION ATTACKED AT LENGTH BELGIAN DIPLOMAT NIJSKENS, WHO WAS CHARACTERIZED AS "MILITARY" ADVISOR OR TACTICIAN TO PLOTTERS. ROLE OF FORMER LIBYAN AMBASSADOR TO ZAIRE ALSO WAS STRONGLY ATTACKED. IN FACT, ACTIONS OF NIJSKENS AND LIBYAN AMBASSADOR WERE DESCRIBED IN TERMS BRINGING INTO QUESTION APPROPRIATENESS OF GOZ ASSURANCES OF DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY IN SUCH CASES.
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TELEVISION MARCH 13 GAVE COVERAGE ESSENTIALLY DESCRIBED ABOVE CONCERNING INVOLVEMENT OF FOREIGN DIPLOMATS. AZAP MARCH 14, WHILE TOUCHING LIGHTLY ON BELGIAN AND LIBYAN ASPECT, OMITTED ANY REFERENCE TO AMERICAN DIPLOMAT. SALONGO AND ELIMA COVERAGE CONTAINED NO REFERENCES TO FOREIGN INVOLVEMENT.

4. GOZ HAS ANNOUNCED THE CALENDAR FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE TRIAL: DEFENSE ARGUMENTS WILL BE HEARD MARCH 14; PROSECUTION WILL REPLY TO THOSE ARGUMENTS MARCH 15; MILITARY TRIBUNAL REPORTEDLY WILL DELIBERATE MARCH 16 AND DELIVER JUDGMENT MARCH 17.

5. COMMENT: SOURCES CLOSE TO PRESIDENT MOBUTU HAD INDICATED TO EMBASSY PRIOR TO THE TRIAL THAT SOVIET UNION, CUBA AND ANGOLA WOULD BE CHIEF TARGETS FOR CHARGES OF FOREIGN INVOLVEMENT. IF, IN FACT, GAME PLAN TO BLAME THOSE GOVERNMENTS WAS INTENDED, IT NOW SEEMS EITHER TO HAVE BEEN SET ASIDE OR AT LEAST TO HAVE BEEN CHANGED SIGNIFICANTLY. FOR THOSE THREE COUNTRIES TO BE IMPLICATED BY GOZ, THAT STEP LOGICALLY SHOULD HAVE BEEN TAKEN IN PROSECUTION'S STATEMENT MARCH 13. INSTEAD, WE HAVE SEEN REITERATED LOW KEY MENTION OF AMERICAN DIPLOMAT AND MORE INSISTENT ACCUSATION OF BELGIAN DIPLOMAT, BUT BOTH DESCRIBED AS ACTING ESSENTIALLY AS INDIVIDUALS RATHER THAN ON BEHALF OF THEIR

GOVERNMENTS. LIBYAN AMBASSADOR, ON OTHER HAND, COMES ACROSS AS
ACTING WITH KNOWLEDGE OF HIS GOVERNMENT. WHILE REASONS FOR THIS
PUBLIC TREATMENT OF PLOT BY GOZ ARE AS YET UNCLEAR, IT IS POSSIBLE
THAT ONGOING EFFORTS BY ANGOLAN AND ZAIRIAN GOVERNMENTS TO EASE
BILATERAL TENSIONS MAY HAVE BEEN A FACTOR.

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Message Attributes

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